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SUBJECT: RICE AND KOUCHNER DISCUSS AFGHANISTAN, GUINEA,  
ERITREA AND DRC

Classified By: Ambassador Susan Rice for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S) SUMMARY. French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner told Ambassador Rice that France would not send additional troops to Afghanistan in the near term, but would take another look at its troop contributions following the outcome of the January 2010 London conference on Afghanistan. Kouchner confirmed that President Sarkozy had spoken to Moroccan King Mohammed VI the previous day about allowing Guinean president Moussa Dadis Camara to remain in Morocco following a recent assassination attempt, so that Minister of Defense Sekouba Konata could take over as caretaker leader to shepherd Guinea to elections. Kouchner said he had also sought support from Burkina Faso President Compoare for Dadis staying in Morocco, as Carmara's return to Guinea could lead to civil war. Ambassador Rice urged Kouchner to support efforts to sanction Eritrean officials who are hindering implementation of the Djibouti agreement and helping to destabilize Somalia by supporting the al-Shabaab armed group.

Kouchner said France would not object to sanctions, but wanted a brief delay due to a French hostage being held in Somalia. Rice asked Kouchner to consider a 12 month mandate for UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), in order to send the message to DRC leader Joseph Kabila that the international community is serious about MONUC's protection of civilians mandate and the need for security sector reform. Kouchner questioned MONUC's effectiveness, and agreed with Rice's assessment that the entire mandate needed to be reviewed. Kouchner expressed some willingness to consider Rice's suggestion that the Security Council renew MONUC for four months to provide time for a strategic review, and at the same time clearly signal its intention to renew MONUC with a revised mandate for an additional 12 months at the end of the review but was non-committal. END SUMMARY.

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AFGHANISTAN  
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12. (C) French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner told Ambassador Rice during a December 7 meeting in New York, that France would deploy no more soldiers, "for the time being", but would reconsider its contributions again in March 2010, based on the outcome of a January 28, 2010 London international conference intended to assess progress on security, governance and development in Afghanistan. Kouchner said French troops and gendarmerie already on the ground in Afghanistan would not leave. He thought the international community would need to be "very strict" with Afghan president Hamid Karzai, whom he believed would otherwise not deliver on promised reforms. Kouchner also expressed doubt about a two-year timeline to begin U.S. troop withdrawal, though Ambassador Rice reminded him that the U.S. goal was to start Afghanistan on a positive trajectory during the

two years, not "change the world in Afghanistan."

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GUINEA  
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13. (S) Kouchner told Rice that French President Nicolas Sarkozy had spoken to King Mohammed VI of Morocco about Guinea's Defense Minister Sekouba Konate taking over as a caretaker leader and shepherding Guinea to new elections. President Dadis Camara, who was shot in an assassination attempt on December 3, would need to remain in Morocco, where he was receiving medical treatment, as Kouchner thought Camara's return to Guinea "would lead to civil war." Rice agreed that Camara should remain in Morocco and that Sekouba was best placed to serve as an interim leader. She said Secretary Clinton had also intended to speak to King Mohammed about Camara remaining in Guinea. Rice said she had spoken to UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Haile Menkerios, who also believed Sekouba was the right person to take over as interim leader, but that Sekouba should not run in an election for a permanent replacement for Camara.

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ERITREA SANCTIONS  
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14. (C) Ambassador Rice urged Kouchner to support U.S. efforts to impose Security Council sanctions on Eritrean officials who are undermining the Djibouti agreement and giving active support to the al-Shabaab terrorist group in Somalia. Rice pointed out that it had been a year since the Security

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Council had threatened sanctions against Eritrean officials if they did not comply with their international obligations, and it was time for the Council to make good on its promise. Kouchner stated that Eritrea served as the only conduit to Somali extremists regarding the final humanitarian worker held hostage. Rice said she understood that France did not want to drive the sanctions process. Somali rebels connected with al-Shabaab, but that Russia and China were hiding behind French reluctance to move ahead with sanctions. African members of the Security Council wanted to get the sanctions in place during December, and had toned down the draft resolution considerably in order to attract wider support. Kouchner said he could join a consensus to impose sanctions, but "additional days" to work toward release of the French hostage "would help us so much."

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)  
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15. (C) Discussing the upcoming mandate renewal for the UN Organization Mission in DRC (MONUC), Rice sought support for a 12-month extension of the MONUC mandate. Rice thought that DRC President Joseph Kabila was looking to signal the beginning of the end of MONUC during June 2010 celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the DRC, and would use the end of a six-month mandate to his own advantage. A 12-month renewal, which would include an initial 4-month strategic mandate review, could make clear to the region that the Security Council is serious about MONUC, and would encourage Kabila to follow through on security sector and other reforms. Rice said the MONUC mandate could be adjusted, if necessary, after the 4 month review. Kouchner said he did not think it mattered whether the mandate would be six or 12 months, since, in his view MONUC was not effective in fulfilling its mandate to protect civilians, and in particular in protecting women from sexual violence. French Permrep Gerard Araud added that it would be difficult to convince the Security Council to create a 12-month mandate if Kabila was seeking a six-month extension, even though MONUC is a Chapter 7 mandate, which does not require consent of the

host government.

¶6. (C) Rice acknowledged that MONUC had failings, but believed it had made a difference in the protection of civilians. A four-month strategic review would allow the Security Council to make the mandate more effective, including to address the real issues of how to continue to pressure the FDLR and how to transform the FARDC into a reliable partner. As an alternative to a 12-month renewal, Rice floated the idea to extend MONUC for an initial four-month period to carry out the strategic review, while at the same time signaling its intention to renew MONUC for an additional 12 months with a revised mandate at the end of four months. Kouchner expressed doubt that the international community would muster the resources to address the real problems in DRC, but expressed some willingness to consider the 4-month 12-month scenario but was non-committal on the timeline.

RICE